

a progressive Canadian newsmagazine

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BRIARPATCH

Volume 29, Number 10

December 2000 / January 2001

\$3.00

The WTO *versus* Democracy



Right to Work



Romanow's Legacy

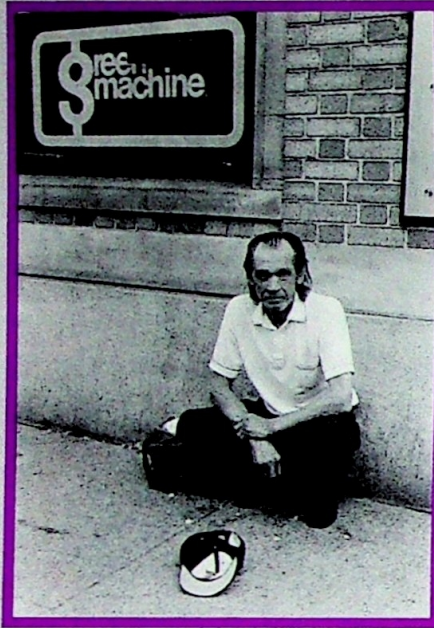


Indonesia

PANHANDLING SHOT DOWN

The National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO) claimed a major victory when Winnipeg's City Council repealed the city's by-law against pan-handling. The Council also passed a new by-law on solicitation that removes all references to panhandling.

NAPO initiated court action in 1995 against the city with the help of the Winnipeg-based Public Interest Law Centre because the by-law against pan-handling discriminated against people who were poor and unfairly infringed on the equality rights of panhandlers. The old by-law was specifically targeted to allow police to remove people who were poor from city streets. NAPO contended that the by-law violated the Charter of Rights of poor people.



UNHAPPY MEALS

Labor Notes writes that a Hong Kong newspaper has reported "that children in an illegal Chinese sweatshop are paid \$3 for a 16-hour work day" to package the toys that come with McDonald's Happy Meals. McDonald's claims that its contractors aren't allowed to work anyone more than 60 hours a week, and that children under 16 years of age are only employed part-time. If McDonald's considers 16 hours a day part-time, I guess the kids are lucky they don't have full-time jobs!

SASKATCHEWAN'S NEW PREMIER CONTEST

Early in 2001, Saskatchewan will get a new premier. He or she will be chosen, not by the province's electorate, but by members of the governing New Democratic Party. But, at this important juncture in our political history, what kind of premier does Saskatchewan need? Man/woman? Rural/urban? North/south? Experienced/fresh? Social democrat/Democratic socialist/Neo-liberal?

Briarpatch invites readers to answer, in 500 words or less, the question: What kind of premier does Saskatchewan need? Deadline for entries is December 31, 2000. Board member Ormond McKague and new *Briarpatch* editor Debra Brin will judge the entries and the best one(s) will be published in the magazine and placed on our new website. The prize is a one year subscription to *Briarpatch*. Send entries by letter to: *Briarpatch*, 2138 McIntyre Street, Regina SK S4P 2R7 or by E-mail to briarpatch.mag@sk.sympatico.ca

VICTORIA SAYS "NO TO NATO"

It will be high tea as usual at the Empress Hotel in Victoria, BC next October. That's because the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association has pulled the planned NATO meeting from the city because they fear major protests. Although some business people regretted the loss of an estimated 600 NATO big spenders, other tourist shop owners heaved a sigh of relief that the downtown core will not be barricaded for a week.

When the city government and police department started to worry about local activists who were organizing a week of peace events, they presented NATO organizers with a report calling for massive spending on elaborate barricades, increased policing and street control. So NATO pulled out in a huff.

Activists in Victoria, now considered more dangerous than nuclear submarines or Cruise missiles, are celebrating with new plans including the premiere of a musical called "Madeleine Albright's New World Tour."



Briarpatch is Saskatchewan's independent alternative newsmagazine committed to building a socialist democratic society. We provide an open forum for disadvantaged peoples and support progressive movements working to change unjust structures and build a genuine political and economic democracy. We support peace, equality, democracy, social justice, Aboriginal self-determination, and the protection of the environment. We oppose the oppression of people on the basis of nation, class, race, gender, ability, and sexual orientation.

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Briarpatch magazine was founded in 1973 and is published ten times a year by Briarpatch Inc., an independent non-profit organization. Many of the articles and photographs in Briarpatch are contributed by volunteers. Deadline for the receipt of articles is 45 days preceding publication. Unsolicited contributions will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Opinions expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Briarpatch board of directors or staff. Articles may be reproduced provided proper credits are given. Briarpatch is a member of the Canadian Magazine Publishers Association and the staff are members of RWDSU Local 568. The Briarpatch office is at Huston House, 2138 McIntyre Street, Regina, SK S4P 2R7. Phone (306) 525-2949. One year subscription: \$24.61. Unions & institutions: \$35.31. Publications Mail Registration No. 08152. ISSN 0703-8968. Membership in Briarpatch Inc. is open to groups or individuals upon application and payment of a \$1.00 membership fee. Briarpatch is indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index and Alternative Press Index and available on microform from the Alternative Press Collection, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346, U.S.A.



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COVER

Elaine Brière

OFF THE TOP

Now that the federal election is finally over, I'd like to share a quote from Dr. Elaine Bernard, the Executive Director of the Harvard Trade Union Program, who summed up the inequality in capitalist democracies: "In a democracy, the practice is 'one person, one vote.' The humblest and most distinguished citizen are equal, with each having only one vote. But in the marketplace, it's 'one dollar, one vote,' which, despite an appearance of neutrality and equality, is an inherently unjust equation that privileges the rich at the expense of the poor."

Another great quote comes from Mildred Macleod, a long-time Council of Canadians member who recently passed away. "Fighting for social justice is not something you do now and then when it suits you. Fighting for social justice is like taking a bath. You do it every day or you start to stink!"

With these two quotes in mind, I'd like to introduce another great line-up of articles in this issue. *Briarpatch* President Phil Johnson starts off by introducing Debra Brin, our new managing editor. One of my favourite memories is of Debra wearing a nun's habit, defiantly standing in front of a semi, keeping it from crossing a picket line. With that kind of creativity and dogged determination, Debra is obviously the right person for the job.

Pam Kapoor writes about a different kind of organizing: organizing the World March of Women in Canada.

Meanwhile, Jason Manett writes about the paradox between traditional family values and the need for more childcare in Canada.

Paul Bobier says that after Toronto Council initially voted in favour of a proposal to bury the city's waste in an abandoned iron mine in northern Ontario, it raised an unprecedented public uproar. But activists from northern Ontario and Toronto later forced the City of Toronto to dump the controversial project.

Barry Mayhew challenges "the growth is good" philosophy in his arti-

cle "No Vacancy." Mayhew challenges the right to unrestricted movement of people, suggesting that the overpopulation of certain areas of the country (like Vancouver), causes the deterioration of the quality of life of the people who live there.

Mike Sheridan informs us of the new push to bring in Right to Work legislation. If this happens, many unions will cease to exist.

Guy Marsden writes about Roy Romanow's legacy as Premier of Saskatchewan. Clare Powell follows this up with an interview with Nettie Wiebe, one of the six candidates for the NDP leadership.

Claire Polster argues that the World Trade Organization is turning democracy into something that can be bought and sold like any commodity. She suggests that the WTO is "a mechanism that converts a basic human right, namely the power to chart the course of one's society, into the de facto private property of corporations."

Asad Ismi writes eloquently about Canadian military exports to Indonesia. He names names: the Canadian companies that are complicit in the death and destruction that the Indonesian military inflicted on the people of East Timor and Indonesia.

Our culture section includes book reviews on human rights in the global marketplace, localization, and Dr. Rosalie Bertell's new book, *Planet Earth: The Latest Weapon of War*.

The "Say What" section is always my favourite part of the magazine. You should enjoy quotes from a candidate for the U.S. Senate, a Fraser Institute director on the need to privatize the water supply in Ontario, a Nike manager, and a Saskatchewan Party MLA.

And finally, in "My Opinion," I bid a fond farewell to all the *Briarpatch* supporters who have assisted us over the years. Being the *Briarpatch* editor has been the best job of my life, and I thank you all for making it so.

Adios.

Changes at Briarpatch

by Phil Johnson

So long George Manz

No one knows *Briarpatch* magazine like George Manz knows *Briarpatch* magazine. Thumbing through back issues, it's almost impossible to find one from the last 20 years that does not have George's name in it somewhere.

A 1990 issue (when George was still a volunteer, just before he became editor), lists George as part of the production crew, a member of the Board of Directors, and the contributor of two articles. Over the last two decades he has volunteered for everything and anything.

Even though he has had a paid position with *Briarpatch* since 1991, I can confidently say that George's volunteer time over the years has exceeded his paid time. Not only does George edit the magazine, he collects bottles, runs the *Briarpatch* garage sale out of his garage, sells tickets at the May Day event, and counts lengths at the Swim-a-thon.

We have big shoes to fill. George told us in August that he was resigning from his Managing Editor job at the end of December. George told us that this is the best job he has ever had, but that he needs a change. We usually burn out our editors after three or four years - George endured for ten, continuing to grow in the job each year. George is a very hard worker, extremely conscientious, and always put out a great magazine. But this was never really a "job" for George, but a cause, one that he believes in profoundly, and that he has contributed to immensely. We wish George the best of luck in his future pursuits.

Welcome Debra Brin

This issue of *Briarpatch* is George Manz's last as Managing Editor. He has been helped on this issue by Debra Brin,

who will take on the full Managing Editor responsibilities in January.

Debra is not a newcomer to *Briarpatch* magazine. She has contributed numerous articles over the years on a

range of topics from labour relations to human rights to international solidarity. In the early 90s, as one of the "Sisters from Hell," she wrote a series of "Sizzle Sheets" that offered a satirical view of politics and people. I think Debra would describe herself as a serious person with a sense of humour. She is one of those rare writers capable of putting two articles side-by-side in the same issue that are totally different in style and content: an off-the-wall "Sizzle Sheet" reporting on a St. Groundhog's Eve celebration beside an analysis of a newly-signed collective agreement!

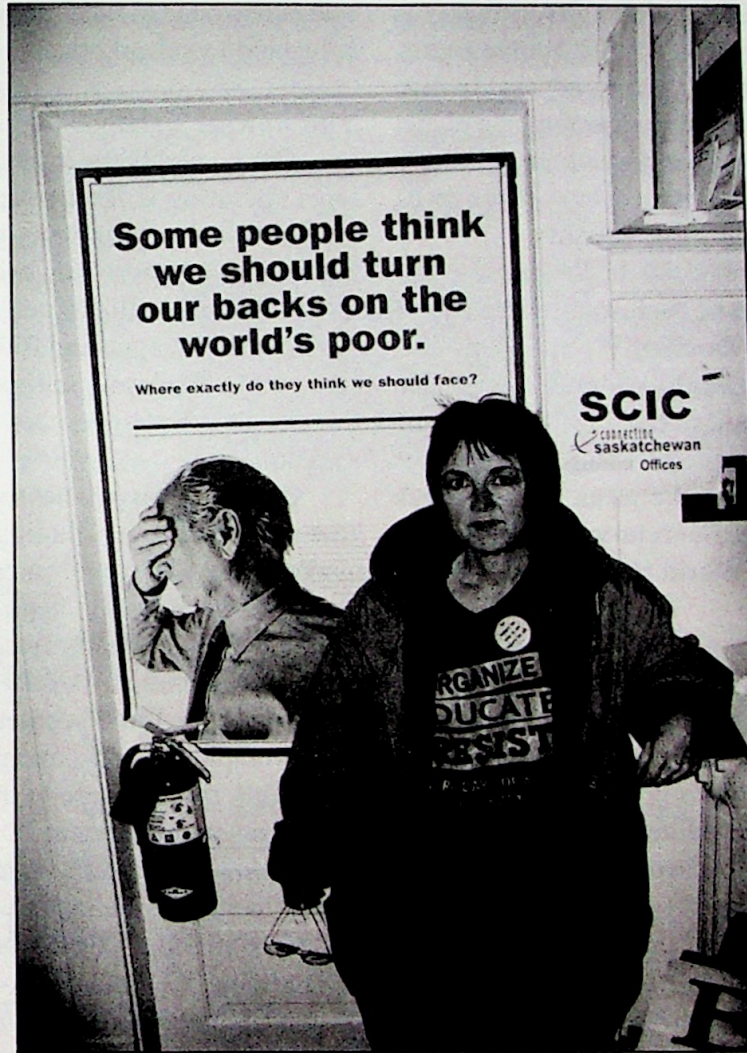
In recent years, Debra has turned her attention to workplace education and international solidarity. She has developed and facilitated training courses for her union, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, as well as

the Prairie School for Union Women and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour's annual camp for teens.

Debra is very much an "internationalist." She has toured Maquiladoras in Mexico, attended trade union conferences in Cuba and the U.S., hosted environmentalist, human rights and trade union guests from South Africa, Cuba, Mexico and East Timor. She also has a special interest in young people - she's been a councilor at the SFL Summer Camp for the past ten years. Expect to see these issues reflected in upcoming issues of *Briarpatch*.

We are pleased and excited to welcome Debra Brin as our new Managing Editor!

Phil Johnson is President of Briarpatch Inc.



On the Road to Women's Equality

The World March of Women in 2000.

by Pam Kapoor

This year, Canadian women marched alongside women in 159 countries to call on governments to respect and promote women's basic human rights. Across Canada, the campaign stretched across diverse communities, cultures and races. Women around the planet spent the year demanding that governments immediately adopt effective and specific measures that will move us toward the realization of women's true equality.

A global movement initiated by la Fédération des Femmes du Québec - organizers of the historic 1995 Bread and Roses March - the World March of Women 2000 has united over 5,300 organizations world-wide around the demand for women's equality. On October 17, the campaign culminated in a Global Rally at the UN Building in New York, and unprecedented meetings between international women's delegations and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and leaders of both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The new face of feminism

The history of women's rights is one of struggle and hard-won victories. Women's campaigns against injustice, poverty, violence and war have brought about some noticeable improvements in women's lives over the past century. Certainly, a major success has been winning the right to vote in most democratic nations.

Here in Canada, the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 directs Canadian and provincial governments to respect and promote women's equality rights. The recognition of women's rights in various international human rights conventions has resulted in an obligation on the part of governments around the world to respect and promote women's equality and human rights.

Yet despite some victories, women's basic security and dignity continue to be threatened and in some cases, denied. Domestically and globally, women working outside the home hold disproportionately lower-paying jobs. Statistics Canada recently reported that on average, Canadian women earn 72 cents for every dollar earned by men. On a world scale, 70 percent of the world's poor who live on \$2 (U.S.) a day or less are women and children. Inequities abound in the area of education. A May 2000 UN report states that two-thirds of the world's illiterate are women. Women also remain targets of violence. A report released

by the UN Population Fund in September 2000 confirmed that at least one in three women around the world has been subjected to sexual abuse.

The newest battle

Our newest battle is the inherently undemocratic structures operating at the international level in the interest of multinational corporations in the name of free trade. The overwhelming opposition to bodies such as the World Trade Organization, as illustrated recently in Seattle, Windsor, Washington, Prague and Beijing, speaks to a new brand of activism: a modern coalition-based counter-attack to the forces that threaten democracy and peace in the new millennium.

Globalization policies imposed around the world by the new world order - including the creation of broader free markets, tax and government reduction, privatization of health care and public institutions, deregulation of work, removal of environmental protection protocol, rules that protect the environment - throw women's lives into jeopardy. These policies force women into non-standard and precarious employment situations, drive our wages down, erode our health, risk our safety, increase poverty, and deny access to essential services.

Globalization hurts women, and we have a crucial role to play to stop globalization. Gloria Steinem was recently quoted as stating: "Seattle is the women's movement." Recognizing the grassroots-based nature of the anti-globalization movement, women are marching alongside a rejuvenated movement of diverse activists. This wave of activism is an exceptionally organized one: both skilled and ready to fight. The new face of feminism is leading this exciting new global struggle. The World March of Women is merely the beginning.

Women unite for our future

The ever-evolving shape of the Canadian women's movement has never been so evident. What an incredibly invigorating year this has been for feminists in Canada. Through the World March of Women, networks have been renewed and strengthened, while fresh coalitions have been formed to organize around and advance the issues brought forward by this campaign.

Here in Canada, the year of organizing in communi-

ties in every province and territory concluded with a National March and Rally in Ottawa on October 15, a Women's SpeakOUT on October 16, and a National Women's Lobby on October 17 on Parliament Hill.

Almost 1,000 individual groups and organizations signed-on to the campaign, while March activities were carried out in over 200 communities nation-wide during the past year. Nearly a quarter-million Canadians signed the international support card directed to the United Nations specifically for this campaign. Perhaps most significantly, in what some are declaring the largest mobilization in the history of the Canadian women's movement, upwards of 35,000 people marched onto Parliament Hill on October 15 in support of the goals of the campaign: to immediately eradicate poverty and violence against women.

Wanting to see Canadian women participate in the World March of Women 2000 in a significant and meaningful way, the Canadian Women's March Committee (CWMC) has committed to bridging geographic and organizational gaps within the Canadian women's movement in order to generate as wide a participation base as possible.

The ultimate goal of the CWMC has been to achieve social justice and eliminate discriminatory attitudes towards women, particularly those facing multiple barriers, through collective efforts with national, provincial, regional and local organizations across Canada. Systemic discrimination exists at many levels in Canada, and admittedly, we still have a long way to go.

In a broader sense, the CWMC, while playing a coordinating role for the Canadian activities around the March, strived to provide appropriate campaign materials and support while linking Canadian women to the international activities of the March. Our intention has always been to work actively with individuals and groups to bring this exciting campaign to as many people as possible, and in particular, to those whose lives are directly reflected in the themes and goals of the campaign.

The beauty of the World March has been the ease with which groups and individuals have been able to subscribe to the overarching goals. We are women dealing with a myriad of social issues and political concerns and this campaign offered enough room for everyone. It has been of utmost importance to illustrate the flexibility of campaign participation offered by this March. Issues brought forward in this campaign have been incorporated into the ongoing mandate of countless Canadian organizations without resulting in excessive additional workload.

The challenges of organizing

From an organizer's perspective, working on outreach for the March has been an interesting challenge. Our movement, as is our country, is vast and diverse, at both a geographic and constituency group level. Certainly, there are numerous communications networks in place to turn to in order to establish an information dissemination and retrieval mechanism for a campaign of this size, but the inclusion of specific sectors of women calls for a sensitively-tailored approach. We can all commit to the notions of inclusiveness and collectivity, but surmounting the various challenges is another matter.

In order to better gauge success, outreach efforts were prioritized in the areas of young women and Native women. Much in-depth time has been spent in initiating and sustaining contact with groups and individuals across Canada who work within those particular sectors of women.

Earlier this spring, a young women's outreach team was struck in order to assess the youth networks in existence and develop strategies for broader inclusion of young women. This team is comprised of young women representing labour, students', women's, Francophone and faith groups. An inspiring ripple-effect took place as the March campaign made its way into streams of young Canadian women: the Francophone Girl Guides adopted the March as their official campaign, while the summer months saw dozens of youth camps shine an educational and participatory light on the campaign. Across Canada, girls as young as 11 examined the themes of the March and celebrated its international spirit. Our

team is poised to continue working together with the objective of building and linking the extensive political participation of young Canadian women.

Working with women from Canada's three national organizations representing Native, Métis and Inuit women has been productive. As members of the CWMC, these groups have provided critical expertise while offering useful support in the advancement of the campaign within Aboriginal communities.

Canada's North, while presenting significant challenges in terms of organizing and mobilizing, remains a poignant reminder of an unjust political system that affords easier access to southern and urban citizens. The same is true of many other rural areas of the country. We were keen to address some of these issues within the context of the March, while introducing the broader campaign to women facing the very situations and questions addressed in our demands.



Given our focus on women in the North, it was my pleasure to initiate another mobilizing team: this time of women in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon who were eager to generate excitement about the March through northern communities. Strategizing led to some interesting ideas about the expansion of political participation in the North.

I had the opportunity to spend time in Iqaluit, where participants, representing various northern communities, discussed the topics in the campaign, the challenges of grassroots organizing in the North, and possibilities for March involvement. The week of learning and sharing in Nunavut has been supplemented with direct mailings to Inuit homes across Canada, through the help of Pauktuuttit (Inuit Women's Association of Canada). In addition, correspondence went to all female chiefs and each provincial/territorial membership association of the Native Women's Association of Canada.

Beyond the areas of focus of our outreach strategy, ongoing organizing efforts were made at national and regional levels to encourage and support the involvement of seniors, women of faith, Francophone, Black, disabled and lesbian women, women of colour, and low-income women. Contact has been initiated and sustained with groups working in the areas of health, violence, poverty, racism and community development. And in terms of publicizing the March as widely as possible, we have enjoyed the support of national and regional coalition partners. Our allies have been invaluable in the dissemination of campaign details, electronically and otherwise, throughout existing networks in Canada.

The CWMC would undoubtedly have achieved even broader success in terms of outreach and inclusiveness were it not for the ever-present time and financial constraints faced by women's groups. Admittedly, no effort is truly complete unless all facets are meaningfully and actively reflected. To that end, there is wide recognition among women across Canada that while the World March of Women allowed us to make noteworthy strides, there is still a vast amount of work to be done with respect to diversity and inclusiveness. In this sense, such a palpable feeling of exuberance and commitment is a positive sign as we move together to close the gaps within our movement and build up an honest and representational unity.

A fundamental factor in moving forward beyond the March, as feminists working for concrete change in Canada, is how we can better foster a meaningful sense of our shared experiences and common goals. A large part of our success will hinge upon how we respectfully and effectively weave together our mosaic of organizing styles and political approaches.

It's time for change

In the political arena, a lobbying document directed at the federal government entitled *It's Time For Change* has served as the blueprint for political reform in Canada. Developed by the Canadian Women's March Committee, in concert with groups and individuals across the country, the document contains 68 demands for legislative and policy modification to address the needs of women in Canada. The demands propose concrete measures organized around the themes of protecting and promoting women's social, economic and cultural rights; women's work; the human rights of disabled, immigrant, Aboriginal, Black women, and lesbians; supporting the human rights of women around the world; and encouraging women's active citizenship. *It's Time For Change* has served as the backbone of a vigorous lobbying campaign as part of the World March of Women. In a succession of political meetings over the past few months, as well as during the national events that culminated in Ottawa from October 15 to 17, women highlighted the need for implementation of these proposals to the Prime Minister, ten Cabinet Ministers, and over 40 Members of Parliament. Later, we will issue a detailed report outlining the gains made during these sessions.

What has the World March of Women meant for feminist solidarity?

The momentous show of strength and solidarity by women world-wide by the World March of Women is a first for the global women's movement. Never before have so many rallied around the critical themes of poverty and violence against women in this significant and unified a manner. The true success of this campaign has been our ability to balance the seriousness of our concerns with a celebration of our synchronized voices. It's remarkable that we've been able to connect globally through a new style of technological organizing to call for the recognition of our lives, the prioritization by national and international governing bodies of our dignity and security, and for the incorporation of women's perspectives into all decision-making processes.

These are not extraordinary goals but they do require extraordinary effort and the participation of all women in Canada and around the world. Though the formal campaign itself has drawn to a close, women have never before felt this incredible sense of solidarity. It's a time for renewal within the women's movement. As we strive to elevate the issues that continue to inhibit true equality, we work in revitalized collaboration with others around the planet to fight for global democracy.

Pam Kapoor is the Canadian Organizer of the World March of Women in the Year 2000.

Childcare & the Public Opinion Paradox

by Jason Manett

If low-cost childcare services were widely available to Canadian families, the opportunities for women in the paid work-force would improve and rates of family poverty would be reduced. In addition, mothers would reduce the stress of balancing childcare and work, thus improving the welfare of Canadian children.

For decades, various governments have ignored the potential benefits of a national childcare system. Beyond government incompetence, the way that Canadians imagine the "ideal family" is also a barrier to creating a national healthcare system. The imagined ideal of a nuclear family consisting of a male working for wages and a woman staying at home contradicts the opinions of Canadians about what an appropriate response is to many mothers working outside the home. The fact that this paradox occurs at the level of public opinion offers some hope since public opinion, unlike the aims of governments, is concerned with more than the interests of business.

There is a belief that mothers are naturally suited to taking care of children because they are naturally caring and nurturing. The negative side of this belief is the view that when mothers work outside the home, it damages their children.

Nation-wide Canadian public opinion polls reflect these sentiments. In 1994, 68 percent of respondents to an Angus Reid poll agreed that "the best type of family in which to raise children has two heterosexual parents with one at work and one at home." In addition, 53 percent of respondents agreed that the effects of women working are harmful for family life.

Negative views about working mothers and the idea that the ideal family includes a working father and a stay-at-home mother are reflected in Canadian workplaces and public policy. In the workplace, benefits and flexibility are frequently unavailable for fathers, whereas reduced hours are more often offered to women.

These conditions reflect an attitude that mothers are parents and fathers are workers. This difference increases gender inequality since reduced hours prevent promotions and also assures lower wages.

Since a national childcare system would encourage mothers to work in the paid labour force, it contradicts "traditional family values." As a result, national governments have not supported strong childcare programs because of their

conservative ideologies and their socially conservative supporters.

The opinions of Canadians about what the ideal family is and the idea that mothers working outside the home is damaging contradict their views which suggest the need for a widely available, publicly supported childcare system.

A 1999 study conducted by the Canadian Policy Research Network indicates that 76 percent of Canadian respondents agree or strongly agree that "A childcare system should be available for all families, with the costs shared by governments and families themselves."

In addition, 84 percent of respondents from the same study view "regulated and supervised childcare as the best solution to providing a safe and educational environment to the children of working parents."

These findings probably reflect the fact that only 13 percent of Canadian families are heterosexual two-parent families with one stay-at-home mother and one working parent. The view of Canadians of this rare family form being ideal conflicts with the views of Canadians about what the best form of childcare is for families with mothers in the paid labour force. The view of the nuclear family as ideal prevents a national childcare system from becoming a reality because it fails to address the reality that most Canadian women work in the paid labour force.

Because of the heavy parenting expectations that women face and the negative view of women's participation in the paid labour force, mothers who work are expected to be Supermoms. This means doing paid work and being the primary caregiver, despite the exhaustion that this combination causes.

This is as unfair as it is sexist. A large proportion of Canadians agree that a government-subsidized national childcare system should be available for all families and that regulated childcare is the best care option for children of working parents.

The idea of the "ideal family," and the negative views towards women working outside the home need to be discredited and changed. This will allow for the views that address reality to become consistent with a new ideal that can actually be achieved.

Jason Manett is a student of politics and sociology at Trent University.

Garbage, Garbage, Garbage

Toronto Council dumps the Adams Mine project.

by Paul Bobier

In mid-October, the City of Toronto approved the Adams Mine near Kirkland Lake, Ontario as a future dump site. One week later, the city scrapped the idea, as neither it nor the consortium for the project wanted to risk the financial costs of unforeseen environmental problems. After a decade of fending off the Adams Mine proposal, northern Ontario residents are pleased to hear it's finally over.

In the late 1980s, the open-pit Adams iron mine was closed. Soon afterwards, North Bay businessman Gordon McGuinty lobbied the town councils of Kirkland Lake, Larder Lake and Englehart with a plan to ship and store Toronto's garbage in the abandoned mine.

The project was put on hold in 1990 when Bob Rae's NDP government used Bill 143 to prevent Toronto-area trash from being dumped in other communities.

But when the Harris government won the 1995 election in Ontario, it removed the restrictions that prevented Toronto's garbage from being disposed elsewhere. Toronto's Metro Works again considered the Adams Mine, with Gordon McGuinty's company - Notre Development - pitching the site to Toronto Council.

To the relief of northern Ontarians, his proposal was rejected in late 1995 on financial grounds. Back then, Toronto's Council preferred to ship its garbage to a landfill site in Michigan.

Former miners said the Adams Mine had many places that let groundwater in and out, and that the mine's water levels fluctuated significantly. One major concern was that garbage stored in the Adams Mine would contaminate the water seeping through, thus polluting the groundwater that flows into nearby aquifers and wells.

Supporters of the dump project claimed that groundwater contaminated by garbage in the mine can be pumped up to the surface, treated, and flushed into the Misema River.

But there was one major technical question: would such a pumping system be able to collect all of the polluted water (about 300 million litres per year) before it leaks out

of the mine?

Notre Development's plan didn't go away, however. During the Harris government's first term, six municipalities were merged into the mega-city of Toronto, which now puts out one million tonnes of trash a year.

The Keele Valley landfill site, presently used to dispose of Toronto's trash, will be closed by the province in 2002. Notre Development formed the Rail Cycle North consortium with Waste Management Inc., the Miller Group,

Ontario Northland Railway and other private investors to push for a re-consideration of the Adams Mine site.

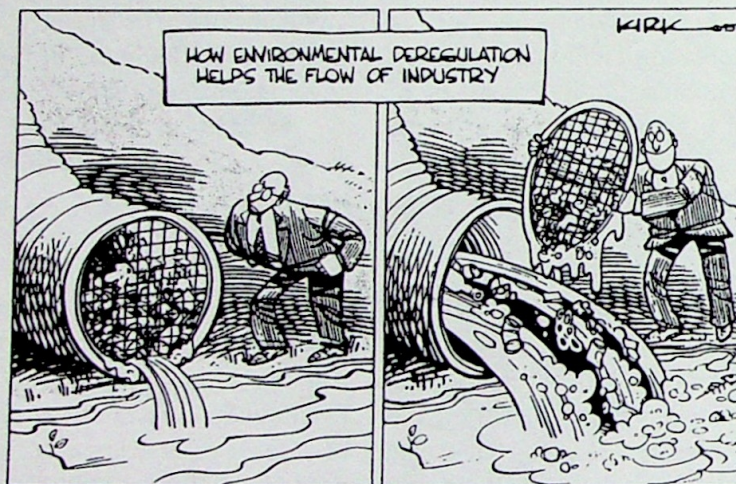
Ontario's re-written Environmental Assessment Act limited the scope of environmental hearings and reduced public input at them. This year, Toronto Council was pressured to approve a \$1-billion, 20-year contract with the Rail Cycle North consortium. It approved the Adams Mine proposal in principle on August 2, and formally on

October 12.

In doing so, the Toronto Council vote has raised unprecedented public uproar, political bickering, and uncertainty. The federal government reserved the right to hold its own environmental impact assessment. As part of the contract, the Rail Cycle North consortium was asked to soften a provision that might hold the city financially responsible if unforeseen disasters cause water pollution from the Adams Mine dump site.

Although the disposal of Toronto's garbage at the Michigan landfill still remained a back-up option in October, Toronto mayor Mel Lastman was clearly pushing for the Adams Mine dump. "We have to do what is right for Toronto and this plan will not hurt anyone. The nearest people are some 80 miles and more away from the site, so I cannot see how it can affect them. Seven studies costing \$148 million have been carried out over ten years by geologists and each report has said the site is safe. The Adams Mine scheme will also create 80 much needed jobs for First Nations people in the area."

The other McGuinty - Ontario's Liberal opposition leader Dalton McGuinty - remains skeptical of the project.



"We should not proceed with the Adams Mine dump site because the risk to our water and, by extension, the risk to the health of Ontarians, is simply too great," he told reporters in early October.

The Ontario opposition leader also warned that polluted runoff from the mine dump could seep into underground streams leading to Lake Temiskaming, which is linked to the Ottawa River.

The Ontario government has sat on the fence throughout the Adams Mine dump discussions and protests, claiming the plan is a matter between three northern Ontario town councils and Toronto Council. It has expressed no environmental concerns about the plan, and says it will respect the collective will of the municipal councils involved.

The Anti-Adams Mine Campaign, based in New Liskeard, considers the Adams Mine an unacceptable dump site. "The Adams Mine Project is a bad design. The concept and costs are unpredictable. A concept of 'hydraulic containment' is being promoted, but it has no track record, and - even with a maximum investment in control technologies - there will be no confidence because there is no case history."

The same organization says there are potential ways contaminated water can leave the mine site without being collected for pumping and treatment. A pit wall could fail and damage the drainage bed, leachate may push out the pit sides and escape downwards, or a clay cap might fail to keep out precipitation and add to the leachate volume.

The minority of Toronto councillors opposed to the Adams Mine dump still aren't too clear on an alternative, Toronto-based solution. Councillor Jack Layton was a key opponent of the plan, but also rejects the incineration of garbage. "The people of Toronto will never allow incineration in their city. It makes us look like we don't know what we're doing."

Although modern incinerators have been improved to emit less air pollution (Brampton's municipal incinerator has been safely in operation for years) left-leaning politicians are against incinerators for disposing of Toronto's trash. In addition, even the newest incinerators can't prevent greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide from being generated by the combustion process.

With the Canadian federal government facing international pressure to meet its Kyoto agreement on limiting greenhouse gas emissions, a massive new incineration plan for Toronto's garbage may not be welcome in Ottawa.

Northern Ontario residents and environmentalists resent a mega-city treating the Kirkland Lake area as a dump site, as protests along the Ontario Northland Railway tracks and in Toronto's City Hall have clearly shown. The Adams Mine issue should make Toronto think more about waste-reduction and recycling programs. Mayor Lastman now says that after the Keele Valley dump is closed, Toronto's garbage will be trucked to a Michigan landfill instead.

Paul Bobier is a freelance writer in Kitchener, Ontario.



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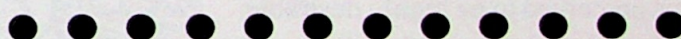
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No Vacancy

Challenging the "growth is good" philosophy.

by Barry Mayhew

A cherished component of all democratic nations is the inalienable right of its citizens to unrestricted freedom of movement. As Canadians and Americans, we therefore have the ability to move freely throughout our respective countries and to put down roots at virtually any location within our nations' boundaries. As certain locations offer advantages over others, such as job opportunities, climate, cultural amenities, etc., the result is a very heterogeneous population distribution pattern. On the surface, this may not be viewed as undesirable nor particularly disadvantageous to a nation's well-being.

Unrestricted freedom of movement, however, may well have a downside in terms of quality of life, a consideration that is rapidly ascending on the list of priorities for many people. It is obvious that the benefits, real or imagined, act as a magnet that draws more and more people to locations perceived to be highly desirable. The irony, of course, is that if population growth continues unabated, the increased density is likely to ultimately destroy the quality of life that made a particular location desirable in the first place. In addition to the perception of a highly desirable environment in which to live, the growth process is given further impetus by Chambers of Commerce, developers, local business owners and most local politicians, whose motivation is essentially fueled by the prospect of economic gain.

Proponents of a no growth, or tightly controlled growth philosophy are frequently accused of not only having anti-democratic sentiments, but also of having a drawbridge mentality. The threat of a deteriorating quality of life is, I believe, facing the residents of the southern one-third of Vancouver Island and several of the southern Gulf Islands. Stretching the imagination just a little, one might draw an analogy between the east coast of Vancouver Island between Qualicum Beach and Victoria and the southern California coastal area.

After World War II and before the mass migration to southern California that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, what is now Greater Los Angeles was comprised of a number of distinct, relatively small communities such

as Burbank, Santa Monica, Pasadena, and Torrance. Each was separated by agricultural zones and/or parkland and each had its own uniqueness, while its residents shared a sense of community distinctiveness. Over the past 30 to 40 years, however, these formerly distinct communities have evolved into a polyglot of freeways, strip malls (replete with every fast food outlet known to humanity), ugly billboards, tract housing and huge shopping centres. Along with this uncontrolled growth has come increased pollution, congestion (sometimes leading to road rage, increased crime, increased demand on a limited water supply and

other problems. In short, the quality of life once enjoyed by southern California's coastal residents has, over the past four decades, deteriorated dramatically and the only winners have been the developers and local business establishments. Is this the type of urban development we want in the future?

I put forward the proposition that there is a level at which a region or community reaches its maximum "desirable" population. To attach a quan-

titative value to this proposition is difficult at best but most of us would agree, I think, that many places on this planet have reached a density level that has largely destroyed the quality of life once enjoyed by its inhabitants.

Philosophical considerations aside, do we, or more accurately, do we through our elected officials, have the means to halt unwanted growth? The process of urban growth can only occur in two ways, either outward (urban-sprawl) or by allowing higher densities within existing urban boundaries. Both processes can be controlled by zoning if the political will to do so exists. There are countless examples of neighbourhoods within our cities whose populations have remained essentially constant for decades simply because elected officials have not succumbed to the pressures brought to bear by developers, residents who would like to subdivide their properties and thereby realize a tax-free capital gain, local business owners and those with a Chamber of Commerce mentality.

Why do so many of us have difficulty with the notion that preventing growth beyond a certain level is both sensi-



ble and practical? When a neighbourhood or community is fully developed, that is, when all space is utilized for specific functions, why is there a need to continue increasing population density until a point is reached where the quality of life begins to deteriorate?

It seems ironic to me that growth is tightly controlled or curtailed in many aspects of our lives, yet we accept and rarely complain. But if someone advocates restricting growth in a city, they are usually accused of being undemocratic, selfish, unreasonable or worse. It is a common practice, for example, for golf clubs and other types of recreational facilities to limit membership because the existing members feel that further growth would result in a deterioration of the quality of their facility. Such decisions rarely cause a public outcry. A decision is sometimes made that a particular habitat cannot support an increase in the wildlife population without serious damage to the environment and steps are taken to "thin out the herd" to ensure sustainability of a particular species. Perhaps we should consider the prospect of thinning out the "human herd" in certain urban habitats.

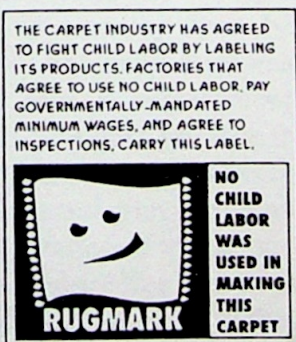
In addition to the south-eastern coast of Vancouver Island and the lower Fraser Valley, the Gulf Islands' pristine beauty and solitude are being threatened by the "growth is good and growth is inevitable lobby." The disciples of this religion appear to be winning on Salt Spring Island,

which has experienced significant growth over the past decade and is evolving into a bedroom community for people who work in the Greater Victoria area. The rural character and charm once associated with Salt Spring Island are rapidly disappearing.

The other jewels in the southern Gulf Island chain have been more successful in resisting unwanted growth, but the pressure to increase population density will continue to threaten the bucolic lifestyle of the residents of Pender, Mayne, Galiano and Saturna Islands.

The battle between those who would pave, rather than save the environment, rages on with no consensus in sight. Over the past decade, we have witnessed the deterioration and virtual destruction of many of the planet's most beautiful and desirable areas because we have, in the name of democracy, allowed population growth to continue unabated. Perhaps it is time to rethink our values as they relate to unfettered freedom of movement and the "growth is good" philosophy, while there are communities still worth saving.

Barry Mayhew has a doctorate in economic geography and has held management positions in the airline and forest products industries. He is currently an associate with the Victoria, B.C. branch of Equinox Financial Group.



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Right to Work

The culture of the cotton fields comes to Saskatchewan.

by Mike Sheridan

Last time it was the Devine Tories. In the late 1980s the Saskatchewan Tories managed to harness enough fear, resentment and greed to elect what has arguably been described as the least competent and most corrupt government in Canadian history.

But the Great Extinction of 1992 didn't quite wipe out the species. This time the beast has a new name: the Saskatchewan Party and their friends the Right To Work Employee Legal Defence Fund and Right to Work Steering Committee. And it has a new cry for the battle against labour: Right to Work.

What is Right to Work?

So-called Right to Work (RTW) laws exist in 21 American states. These laws make it illegal for any employer to agree that any employee must become or remain a union member or pay union dues as a condition of employment. Basically, it's a type of union busting.

The intent of these laws is to cripple unions financially. Even if a union is recognized as the bargaining agent in the workplace, employees still can't be required to join the union or pay dues. Nevertheless, the union remains legally obligated to represent every employee as if they were dues-paying members.

These laws produce free riders who enjoy all the benefits of the union's collective agreement, including wages, benefits and grievance protection, but contribute nothing to the operation of the union. They pay no dues, cross picket lines, and are free to disrupt the life of the union and undercut their co-workers without penalty.

America the Beautiful

So-called Right to Work laws in the U.S. resulted from an early attempt by a Republican Congress to roll back the New Deal. The Wagner Act of 1935 guaranteed that unions would have the exclusive right to represent employees during the life of a collective agreement. With that protection, millions of U.S. workers joined unions.

But in 1947 the Republicans struck back to protect their friends in business. Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act over Democratic President Harry S. Truman's veto. Taft-Hartley permitted any state to pass laws which prohibited union membership as a condition of employment.

"You will find some people saying that they are for the

so-called 'right-to-work' law, but they also believe in unions," Truman said in opposition to the Taft-Hartley law. "This is absurd - it's like saying you are for motherhood but against children."

RTW: the badge of the backward

Almost all RTW states passed their legislation in the late 1940s and early 1950s. They were joined by Louisiana in 1976 and Idaho in 1986. At the time, their right-wing supporters predicted a flood of business investment and economic growth. It was the mid-century equivalent of the "Open for Business" mantra chanted by our own neo-conservatives.

In 1995 and again this year, the AFL-CIO used U.S. federal government sources to compare the situation between states that have RTW legislation and those that allow free collective bargaining. After about 50 years of experience with so-called Right to Work laws, here are the results. (All figures are in U.S. dollars).

- * Workers in free collective bargaining states make \$4,456 per year *more* on average than their RTW counterparts. That's a 15 percent increase.

- * No RTW state has a pay level above the national average.

- * Not one of the top 15 states that have the highest average annual pay is a RTW state. Ten of the 15 states with the lowest manufacturing wages are RTW states.

- * Of the 21 RTW states, seven have no minimum wage laws at all. Of the remaining 14, only ten have minimum wages at least equal to the federal minimum wage of \$5.15.

And it doesn't end with wages. Not just workers, but whole communities suffer. Compared to states with free collective bargaining, on-the-job fatalities in RTW states are 40 percent higher, workers' compensation benefits are lower, health care coverage for the whole population is lower, infant mortality is higher, poverty rates are higher, school dropout rates are higher, investment in public education is lower, and regressive per capita sales tax revenues are higher.

After a half century of waiting, you'd think even neo-conservatives might begin to wonder if the ship is really going to come in. But the fact is that most of the RTW states were underdeveloped after World War II, and RTW laws have helped to keep them that way.

Why RTW in Saskatchewan?

Of course RTW laws aren't really about economic prosperity, or the good of the population, or about better prospects for our children. Right to Work is about more power for the powerful, more wealth for the wealthy, more of everything for the few at the expense of everyone else.

And the Saskatchewan Party, it seems, has never seen a reactionary American idea it couldn't love.

So the Saskatchewan Party and the Right To Work Employee Legal Defence Fund and Right To Work Steering Committee seem to have bonded in an alliance.

Right to Work in Saskatchewan seems to have been born in the successful Steelworker organizing drive at Doepker Industries, a farm implement manufacturer in Anaheim, Saskatchewan. Soon after the application for certification, the RTW forces organized a public meeting in Humboldt. In a hall festooned with Saskatchewan Party signs and banners, Larry Schneider, president of the Prairie Implement Manufacturer's Association (PIMA) denounced laws which permitted employees to organize by signing union cards without their employer's knowledge, and promoted the RTW program.

Next came a public meeting in Saskatoon held in the midst of an organizing drive by the Service Employees International Union at direcTel, a U.S.-based telemarketing firm. The company's employees were leafleted to attend. Again, the meeting was chaired by Larry Schneider. Also in attendance were leaders of the North Saskatoon Business Association, the Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Association, the Saskatoon Downtown Partnership, and the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce. The keynote speaker was Jocelyn Dumas, president of the Quebec Right-To-Work Association.

The intent of both these meetings is clear: hamstringing workers' ability to defend themselves against employers by destroying the unions which represent them. They know, as governments of all stripes shift to the right, that an active labour movement is the only remaining institution able to defend workers' rights.

Is your union ready?

To union activists, RTW laws are a transparent fraud. As Martin Luther King once said, "We must guard against being fooled by false slogans, as 'right to work.' It provides no 'rights' and no 'work.' Its purpose is to destroy labour unions and the freedom of collective bargaining."

But how would the idea appear to trade union members? Do they all understand and support unions and the idea of collective bargaining? Are there any who would think it's OK to receive all the benefits of the collective agreement and yet still be able to refuse to pay union dues, cross picket lines, or cut separate deals with the employer?

Imagine how a RTW law would affect your position at the bargaining table. How would it affect your union's

ability to protect the living standards of union members and their families? Would your union have the resources to fulfill its obligations? Could your union survive at all?

A golden opportunity

The new RTW alliance may be a threat but it's also a golden opportunity to build strength and commitment among union members by talking to them about an issue that concerns them.

The strength of the Canadian labour movement resides in the vitality of its rank and file activists. It resides in our shop floor education and communications networks which operate through skilled and informed steward bodies and union counseling networks. It resides in workers talking to each other one-on-one.

Surveys of union members have repeatedly shown that members want information and analysis from their unions. They want to be free to disagree, but they want to know what the union thinks about questions which affect the workplace and the community.

So the RTW alliance just might be doing unions a favour, but only if we seize the opportunity. What if we reverted to the practice of our trade union ancestors? Every month they circulated through the workplace, discussing issues, educating, surveying, reporting and talking union.

Shop stewards in those days were educators as well as contract officers. Unions still have those networks in place, if they choose to use them. It was that kind of one-on-one member contact which made the union strong in days gone by, and it can keep the union strong today as well.

As one trade unionist said, Right to Work laws are "the culture of the cotton fields" transported to Canada. There's no place for RTW laws in Canada. Unions can use this issue to revitalize their internal communication networks. They can use it to learn again how to talk to their members and to build a base of solidarity and support which no amount of right-wing propaganda can overcome.

Mike Sheridan is Regional Representative of the Canadian Labour Congress and is based in Saskatoon. U.S. data will soon be available on the SFL website as well as through your local union.



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ROY ROMANOW'S LEGACY

by Guy Marsden

In September, ending months of rampant speculation about his future, Roy Romanow announced that he will be stepping down as Premier and leaving politics forever. A skilled politician and gifted orator, Romanow played a crucial role in patriating the Canadian constitution when he was Attorney-General in Allan Blakeney's government. As Premier, he eliminated a mammoth deficit inherited from Grant Devine's Conservatives.

But Romanow's legacy may well be the transformation of his New Democratic Party from a populist, social democratic vehicle into a more conservative and business-friendly party machine.

The deficit made me do it

Admittedly, when Romanow became premier in 1991, his hands were tied to an extent by the fiscal mess left behind by the corrupt and incompetent Tory regime. This restricted the ability of his incipient NDP government to meet pent-up citizen demand for expanded social programs. Substantial cuts to transfer payments by the federal Liberal government didn't make things any easier.

While few denied the pressing need to reduce the deficit, many traditional New Democratic supporters in the labour and social justice movements questioned the fairness of the government's austerity package. Instead of raising hundreds of millions of dollars by increasing the resource royalties that were lowered by Devine, the Romanow government chose to make significant cutbacks to health, education and municipal grants and raise regressive taxes that hit the poor hardest.

When the budget was finally balanced, the politics of lowered expectations did not end. The Romanow government opted not to restore deficit casualties like the Children's Dental Plan or the Prescription Drug Plan or embark on new social innovations, something previous CCF/NDP governments were famous for. Instead, the government trumpeted the so-called "balanced approach" which would see future surpluses divided equally between tax cuts, debt reduction and spending on health and education.

(Coincidentally, Romanow's balanced approach was actually more conservative than the federal Liberals' 1997 election pledge to spend one-half of surpluses on new spending and the rest on tax cuts and debt reduction.)

Although health, education and some other departments saw some modest spending increases in recent years, the overwhelming emphasis has been on tax cuts. In the last

provincial budget, prodded on by the business lobby and the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, the Romanow government announced the largest income tax cuts in Saskatchewan history. Rivaling cuts delivered by neo-con Mike Harris, they primarily benefited the wealthy at the expense of public services.

Friend or foe?

Traditional NDP supporters cringed as the fiscal policies of the Romanow government drew regular praise from the right-wing Fraser Institute and conservative newspaper

editorialists.

Indeed, alienating natural allies has been a hallmark of the Romanow government. While they made some improvements to labour legislation, the NDP balked at implementing pay equity or anti-scab legislation, and angered trade unionists when locked-out SaskPower workers and striking nurses were legislated back to work. Environmentalists were enraged by the expansion of uranium mines, forestry policy and the government's virulent opposition to the Kyoto accord, which aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Anti-poverty activists were frustrated by the forgotten promise to eliminate the need for foodbanks and the failure to boost social assistance rates.

Many grassroots NDP members were also appalled with the government's massive expansion of gambling, opposition to federal gun registration, promotion of agribusiness and implicit support for free trade agreements.

Not surprisingly, the move to the right under Romanow's premiership drove many New Democrats to leave the party. In fact, the NDP lost two-thirds of its membership since 1990. Plummeting membership and declining



donations led the NDP to lay off 8 of 13 party office staff in June and to cut the frequency of its once influential party organ, *The Commonwealth*, from eight times a year to four.

Frustrated by a tightly-controlled, top down process that shut out grassroots dissent, some former supporters created a new left-wing party, the fledgling New Green Alliance, while others dropped out of electoral politics altogether. Voter turnout dropped to 64 percent in the last two elections, unheard of in such a profoundly politicized province.

After winning two large majority governments in 1991 and 1995, Romanow's NDP almost lost the 1999 election to the Saskatchewan Party, which had effectively realigned the province's political right. Romanow patched together a majority government by forming a coalition government with the rump of Liberals who were elected.

But the coalition government and its first, tax-cutting budget proved to be unpopular. A spring poll found that respondents opposed the budget by a two to one margin. More ominously, the same poll found support for the NDP plunging to 17 percent, while Saskatchewan Party support surged to 31 percent. Romanow's personal popularity, once impenetrable, also began to slide.

Certainly, Romanow was not alone in his aversion to more traditional social democratic policies. During his tenure as premier, other NDP governments and social democratic parties around the world drifted rightward as well. British Labour Party leader Tony Blair dubbed this approach the "Third Way." But stripped of its progressive rhetoric, the philosophy amounted to little more than acceptance of neo-liberal policies of free trade, privatization, deregulation, tax cuts and social program cuts. The balance of power in these social democratic parties shifted from the party rank and file and social movements to party bosses, pollsters and spin doctors. For Romanow's inner circle, demobilizing the party's foot-soldiers was the price paid for getting their way.

The road ahead

Many New Democrats are hoping the leadership race to succeed Romanow will spark a lively and open policy debate within the NDP. The decision to hold a full membership vote to elect the new leader represents one step towards reviving the party's once energetic membership base, and perhaps improving party finances.

But what are the prospects for a return to more traditional social democratic politics?

Somewhat surprisingly, many right-leaning cabinet ministers have bowed out of the leadership race. Deputy Premier Dwain Lingenfelter resigned to take a job with Occidental Petroleum in Alberta. Finance Minister Eric Cline and Economic Development Minister Janice McKinnon also declined to run.

The absence of these cabinet heavyweights from the leadership race makes the contest more fluid. Justice Minister Chris Axworthy, an advocate of the Third Way, Labour Minister Joanne Crofford, Highways Minister Maynard Sonntag, former cabinet minister and Romanow advisor Lorne Calvert, and Cogema lawyer Scott Banda have all thrown their hat into the ring.

Considerable excitement on the political left, both inside and outside the NDP, was generated when former National Farmers Union president Nettie Wiebe announced her candidacy. Describing herself as an "egalitarian," Wiebe definitely falls outside the party establishment, but could help rebuild the party in rural Saskatchewan. If she is to mount a serious challenge, she will have to convince the thousands who have left the party to give the NDP one more chance.

Regardless of who wins the NDP leadership, it seems pretty clear that a more meaningful expression of social democratic principles and policies is the only thing that will be able to mobilize the NDP's traditional constituencies in the lead-up to the next election. Because it's going to take more than the bland rhetoric of the "balanced approach" to head off a Saskatchewan Party massacre.

Guy Marsden is an occasional contributor to Briarpatch magazine. A previous version of this article appeared in Regina's Prairie Dog magazine.



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DROP IN SOON!

As we go to press, there are six candidates to become the new leader of the NDP in Saskatchewan. Nettie Wiebe is one of them. She farms at Laura, Saskatchewan and served as Women's President of the National Farmers Union from 1989 - 1994. In 1995, she was elected president of the NFU, the first woman to lead a national farm organization in Canada. She is currently professor of Church and Society, lecturing on ethics and social and economic justice at St. Andrew's College, University of Saskatchewan. Clare Powell interviewed her in Regina soon after she announced her decision to run for the leadership of the NDP.

Briarpatch: Why did you decide to run to become the Leader of the NDP?

Nettie Wiebe: In some ways the question for me should be reframed "why did we decide to run" because it was a group of us who put our heads together and were persuaded that this is a relatively rare opportunity, both within the NDP and within the province, to open the debate on a broader range of topics and to challenge some of the assumptions which the party currently seems to have and seems to be working from. These assumptions include globalization, the role of government, and the organization of the economy.

There is now a space where we can open some of these questions and I hope we might be able to include a broader range of opinion. I often have the sinking feeling that only middle class people with law degrees or Chamber of Commerce adherents help shape the assumptions around the economy and public policy. They have a lot of input in terms of what the programing will be. But there's a large group of people who feel completely outside that conversation in any real way.

Election time is the only time that they might be included in that conversation. Elections have now become a one-dimensional discussion on a short list of shopping items. Election times don't seem to me to be forums where public policy in its broad meaning is even up for discussion. So this is an opportune time to provoke that broader conversation and try to include a larger range of perspectives.

Briarpatch: Are there any issues that you think we should really focus on in this campaign?

Nettie Wiebe: I think what we need to focus on is direction. In order to achieve any sort of rethinking about the direction we're going, we need to examine again which values we want expressed in our public policies. One is the issue of inter-dependance, that's a short way of saying we live in a place where the others that live around us and how they live matters in terms of our own quality of life and our society. We're very prone to overlook that because there's been a relatively long period now where we've been more and more inclined to think of ourselves as individuals and consumers rather than as inter-dependent persons in community and society. So in broad outlines that's what public policy should try to express. It should express our values and those are the values of egalitarianism, community-building, and ecological consciousness.

The public policy that expresses that has very concrete outcomes. For example, we are very inter-dependent in the sense that the quality of our environment also very much depends on how others live within it. That includes the glo-

bal community. The Kyoto agreement has major implications on various kinds of transportation, such as transporting grain. As you march down that line, from examining your values to outcomes, I think you have to conclude some very concrete things. For example, the transportation infrastructure in rural Saskatchewan has to be protected and in fact enhanced. We cannot continue to abandon rail lines. If we take seriously our inter-dependence we will begin to take the growing gap between the rich and the poor much more seriously. Public policy can ameliorate that.

Briarpatch: So you would challenge the either/or situation that some people get into about we've got to have the jobs and if that means sacrificing the environment, for example in the nuclear industry or hog barns or mining in general, you think we can both protect the environment and create employment?

Nettie Wiebe: In most cases, I think it's a false dichotomy that it's either jobs or it's the environment; it's either higher wages or business investment. That overlooks how inter-dependent we are. Take jobs and the environment. When you look at the global picture, and you think about what's likely in the future, there's a great deal of hype about investment in higher technologies like the bio-technology industry in agriculture, and a higher tech information society. Of course, technological advances are an obvious way in which our society is evolving. But the under-side of that, and I think this is going to be very apparent in the not too distant future, is that what's very valuable, in terms of the global economy, are our ecological resources. The challenge to growth in the future won't be technological advances, it will be ecological care. It's complex, and unfortunately mostly ignored, but we could be much more innovative and forward-thinking in a place like Saskatchewan. We shouldn't just be adapting to and trying to fit ourselves into what others, in other places, have described as the global competition. We should in fact be looking a little more imaginatively and a little more intelligently at where we belong in it and what some likely long-term prospects are. On that front, we could be doing some far better things than we are doing now. Far better in terms of being more careful about our ecological outlook, about what kinds of products we are shipping out of Saskatchewan, and at what ecological cost.

Why are we producing pork in intensive hog operations with obviously negative ecological consequences for an international market that (a) pays a low price for it while (b) the growing part of it is asking for food stuffs that are not produced under those conditions? Agricultural bio-technology is in exactly the same category. We already know that

there's a growing body of mothers who don't want that kind of food on their dinner table.

We have a way of growing a lot of food in this province. It would take a sort of challenge to the current marketing experts to rethink that. But I think that Saskatchewan is one of those places where we have been innovative and forward-looking in rethinking how we live here and what we do here. If we could unhook ourselves from the current barrage of propaganda, and that's mostly corporate propaganda about what good investment comes to what cutting-edge technology, we might again be in a place where we can do far more futuristic thinking in this province.

Briarpatch: For many decades, the focus of agriculture has been export-oriented. Can you expand on that?

Nettie Wiebe: By all the agricultural standards of both the NAFTA and WTO agreements, we are brilliant successes. Over the last decade we have more than doubled, tripled the value of our exports in agri-foodstuffs as they say. By global standards and ag-economist standards, we have been a brilliant success, yet simultaneously, we are suffering the worst farm crisis we've had since the 1930s. If anybody wants to say to me that we just have to continue to do this more and better in order to be successful, I would ask them to do a performance evaluation, which is surely what everybody who is in the modern business world would want done, and notice just what is actually happening in agriculture in terms of farm families, farm income, prices, profitability, and investment. Take all of your standard rosters, and then, if you already aren't convinced that this way of doing it is not brilliantly successful, then add some of the real human costs: the costs to community, the cost to our social structures, the cost to families, and the heartache of losing farms. It doesn't take a genius to conclude that there must be a better way of doing agriculture here.

Briarpatch: We have a large Aboriginal population in Saskatchewan who often feel left out of the mainstream. What are your thoughts on how you would approach their problems or have them approach you?

Nettie Wiebe: The problems of indigenous peoples in many

parts of the world are very much the same as they are here. It's a problem of physical displacement, of cultural displacement, of being discounted and marginalized in their own lands to such an extent that their own sense of well-being, pride and identity is challenged as a community. That's sadly the case in many parts of the world and certainly the case in North America and Saskatchewan.

It's a complex question of the interface of cultures. I'm hopeful that we of European origin, we settlers, we immigrants, rethink our strategies of economic industrialization and begin to see the ecological and community effects of

that. I hope that we might find that the Aboriginal peoples have already thought long and hard about it, that they have some wisdom there, and that they might find spaces and places within our public polity which are large enough for them.

I say this in a sort of broad way because I haven't worked in those communities. I'm one of those people who object to someone who has never lived in a rural community being an instant expert on it. So I think any Saskatchewan Aboriginal citizen should object to a leader of any party or a person in the public domain speaking as if they knew, when they haven't lived there.

Briarpatch: As a feminist, what do you think you would be able to do as a woman premier that maybe the Government of Saskatchewan has failed to do on women's issues?

Nettie Wiebe: In an egalitarian society surely there is the fundamental recognition

that there is equality between the genders. And that's the equality for the work that they do, the rights that they have within that society. We've made some gains in terms of the spaces women have achieved. I have no doubt that the feminist movement has made some inroads. But we aren't nearly there.

There are some fundamental questions of value. Women always have been and continue to be engaged and occupied with reproductive labour: child bearing, child rearing, and domestic work. In a society where production and items and information are valued so highly, and people are not valued so highly, the reproductive work is marginalized and discounted in ways which are very damaging to the valuation of



women: to their self-valuation, to their status in society, clearly to their economic well-being. That needs to be re-thought from a much more egalitarian point of view and a much better appreciation of what really matters. And what really matters is not just the economic context, but the social context in which children are reared.

Children matter and public policy should reflect that. Those that look after children, educate children, and whose predominant preoccupation is the well-being of children, shouldn't be the least valued and least paid because society says what they do isn't valuable. Whereas those who move money around are the highest paid because money is what matters.

In some ways, this is a moral argument but it's also an argument about values and public policy. And periodically, public policy needs to critically re-examine itself. People need to ask, "Does this really mean that at the heart of it we think that manufacturing items is far more important than bearing children? Does this mean that objects and money are far more important than people?"

The global economy has changed a great deal around us. But instead of just adapting to it all the time, we should create ourselves a space to rethink some of the places where we adapt.

I can't think of a better platform to do it in during this time in our political history than in this leadership race because this is a contest about direction. If we don't like where we're headed, we shouldn't think we'll get to a different place if we keep going in the same direction.

NETTIE WIEBE

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Trading in Freedom

The WTO and the commodification of democracy.

by Claire Polster

At a recent conference on globalization, I had a startling realization about the World Trade Organization (WTO). While we have been right in arguing that the WTO serves to *erode* democracy throughout the world, it occurred to me that it does something else besides. The WTO also *commodifies* democracy (that is, it turns it into something that can be bought and sold). Through the World Trade Organization, citizens of countries around the world are forced to pay corporations for the right to exercise their collective will. (For example, Europeans now pay millions not to be sold hormone treated beef). In this way, the WTO transforms democratic powers into the private property of transnational corporations (TNCs) which they may sell, on a per use basis, to citizens who are able and willing to pay the price.

To elaborate on this idea and its implications, I want to explain how I came to it. I do research in the area of intellectual property, which involves the privatization and commodification of knowledge. Two things in particular fascinate me about intellectual property. The first is the conversion, through intellectual property rights, of intangible things, such as knowledge, into private property. Just as the 18th century Enclosure Acts in England transformed commonly shared land into the private property of particular individuals, so intellectual property rights enclose the commons of knowledge, converting collectively produced and shared ideas, interpretations, information, and even sounds and smells into the private property of individuals and corporations. The second interesting thing about intellectual property is that it allows people to make money not only by productively employing their private knowledge, but by controlling others' access to it. Owners of intellectual property can become spectacularly wealthy by never using their ideas themselves, but by charging others for their use and/or suing others for using their knowledge without paying for the right to do so.

So what has this got to do with the WTO? Just as intellectual property rights enclose the commons of knowledge and thereby transform intangible public goods into private property, so the WTO encloses democratic rights and transforms them from the collective powers of citizens into the private property of corporations. Evidence of this

is that the WTO prevents citizens from freely and continuously exercising their democratic rights, forcing them instead to purchase these rights, one at a time, from TNCs. The way in which we purchase the freedom to exercise our collective will is through paying "lost opportunity costs" to corporations each time we wish to do something with which they do not agree (such as preventing the bulk export of water or banning the import of genetically modified foods). Rather than seeing these payments as punitive trade sanctions, we should instead see them as the price of the license to use the democratic freedoms that have become the property of TNCs, which is analogous to the price people must pay to use others' intellectual property.

In short, I am suggesting that we see the WTO as a mechanism that converts a basic human right, namely the power to chart the course of one's society, into the de facto private property of corporations. The WTO certainly allows corporations to use their powers to go into countries and impose their wills on the citizens that live there. However, it also allows corporations to sell these powers to citizens, permitting them to exercise their collective will, one wish at a time, for a price. Seen from this angle, the World Trade Organization does not simply erode democracy but commodifies it, producing a new, and potentially quite lucrative money making opportunity for TNCs.

This new perspective on the WTO can heighten our sense of the perversity of global corporate rule. Not only may TNCs now profit from pillaging cherished national programs, services and resources, but they may also enrich themselves by exploiting citizens' desire to protect these valued public goods - at least until their financial ability to do so runs out (which is likely to happen far sooner in countries in the South than in the North). More than perverse, however, we should see the commodification of democracy as a deeply disturbing development. It amounts to the imposition - by stealth - of an unprecedented form of human servitude, in which only individual instances of freedom may be acquired, by wealthy collectives, at prices set by the faceless officials of the WTO.

While the notion that the WTO seriously erodes democracy has clearly resonated with citizens around the globe, the idea that the World Trade Organization priva-

tizes and commodifies democracy may further advance our fight against this institution. On the one hand, the notion that the WTO forces citizens to pay for their democratic rights may be even more powerful in terms of galvanizing public opposition to the WTO. This idea may also open up new avenues of resistance to the WTO and to global corporate rule more generally. For instance, once we make the case that the WTO effectively trades in human freedom, we may open up either the institution or its operations to various forms of legal challenge. Above all, this view of the WTO reinforces the argument that the protection and

expansion of democracy world-wide is vital to the struggle against global corporate rule. Indeed, it reveals that preserving democracy is not only a *means* of defeating corporate rule, but is also an *end* of this struggle, as even our fundamental human right to control our lives and our futures is now being put up for sale.

Claire Polster is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Studies at the University of Regina.

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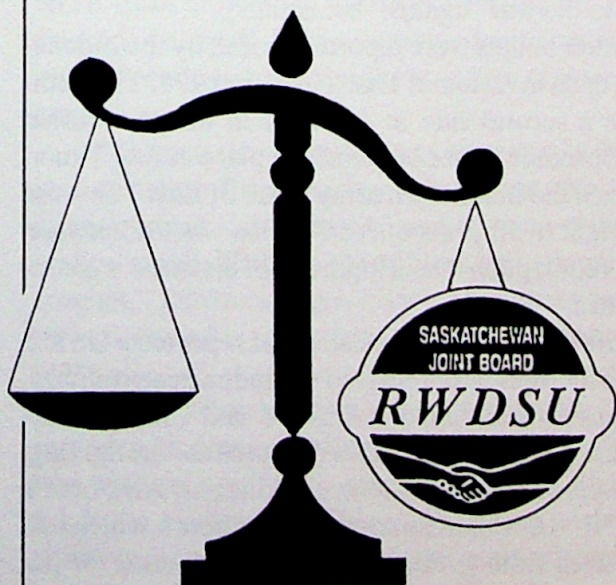
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Arming a Genocidal Force

Canadian military exports to Indonesia, 1979-1999.

by Asad Ismi

As the Indonesian army and its militias set fire to Dili and killed thousands of East Timorese in September 1999, the Canadian government refused to stop the export of military goods to Indonesia. This at a time when even the United States, Jakarta's main backer, had suspended military sales to Indonesia, as had the European Union and Australia.

According to documents obtained from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) through the Access to Information Act, six military export permits for the Indonesian Air Force and Ministry of Defence, worth a total of \$119.3 million, were granted by the Canadian government during 1998-1999 to unidentified companies. The permits were for aircraft engines, navigation systems and training simulators or parts.

As the Indonesian military's militias laid waste to East Timor, Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy refused to revoke these permits. In one case, the equipment was ready for immediate shipment.

For Kerry Pither of the East Timor Alert Network, Ottawa's policy signified "34 years of Canadian groveling to the Indonesian military regime."

The Canadian government has authorized military exports to Indonesia on a massive scale. The value of export permits DFAIT has issued for 1991-1999 total \$545.8 million. The government's claim that these exports are "non-offensive" - "with no reasonable risk of being used against the civilian population" - is unconvincing. Any military export can be used offensively, especially by a genocidal army that killed one million Indonesian civilians in 1965, 200,000 East Timorese (one-third of the population) after its 1975 invasion of East Timor, and thousands more in 1999.

In fact, these export permits violate Canada's own Import/Export Act which bans the sale of Canadian military goods to "countries engaged in hostilities" or to "countries whose governments have a persistent record of serious violations of human rights."

According to Project Ploughshares, such permits are also inconsistent with the "human security agenda" Canadian foreign policy now endorses.

In 1995 alone, the Chrétien government issued \$362.4 million worth of military export permits for Indonesia. These included permits for component parts for British Rapier missiles, communications technology to be provided by Canadian Marconi (now BAE Systems Canada), and compo-

nent parts for use in weapon systems to be rerouted to Indonesia through the U.S.

Ottawa does not regularly screen indirect military exports. Also, military export permits are not required for the sale of goods to the Indonesian military which Ottawa has classified as "civilian." These include helicopter engines.

According to DFAIT, the total value of Canadian military exports to Indonesia (actual sales) during 1979-1997 was \$8.9 million. Project Ploughshares, however, reports the figure of \$22.5 million for the period 1981-1996.

The discrepancy is explained by differing definitions of what constitutes a military export.

For Ploughshares, any item going to the military is a military export, while DFAIT does not count those goods that have dual (civilian and military) use and are not specifically made for the military even though they are being sent to the armed forces.

Ploughshares' list of Canadian military exports to Indonesia for 1981-1996 includes ammunition (Valcartier Industries), parachutes (Irvin Industries), military vehicles (Levy Auto Parts Co.), helicopter engines (Pratt and Whitney, worth \$20 million in 1985 and 1986), a navigation system for the Indonesian air force (Leigh Instruments Ltd.), a radar system for the Indonesian navy (Litton Systems Canada) and EOD Body Armour Type V.

According to José Ramos Horta, East Timor's vice-president, "weapons made in Canada have almost certainly been used in the war" against his country.

Valcartier bullets were reportedly used by the Indonesian Army in its invasion of East Timor in 1975. The company made a second sale in 1981 when the Indonesian military's Operation Fence of Logs took place in East Timor. This involved the Indonesian army's use of East Timorese civilians (eight to 50 years old) as human shields between itself and Fretilin guerrillas. Hundreds of civilians were reportedly killed.

In April 1998, the Indonesian press reported a US\$75 million sale by Bombardier Inc. to the Indonesian military. The deal was for ten Canadair CL-215 and CL-215T aircraft. These are amphibious planes designed for firefighting. The Canadairs were to replace the Indonesian Air Force's Grumman HU-16 Albatross amphibious aircraft which had been converted from firefighters into planes used for patrol and surveillance, search and rescue, and transport.

The federal government's Export Development Cor-

poration (EDC) offered Jakarta negotiable long-term credit to buy the ten Canadian-built planes.

Similarly, Pratt and Whitney Canada's helicopter engine sales to Indonesia have been greatly encouraged by the Canadian government. While the 1985 sale was financed by the EDC, the one in 1986 was made public during the visit of James Kelleher, Minister for International Trade, to Jakarta in February 1986. Kelleher called the engine contract "a good example of the inroads Canadian companies are making in sales of high tech goods to Indonesia."

Since 1996, Ottawa's export strategy for East Asia has focused on increasing the sale of Canadian military goods through the hosting of foreign military missions to Canada, official participation in air shows and an Asian tour by Canadian navy frigates which included stops in Indonesia.

Military export permits that were issued during 1988-1997 include the following equipment categories:

- * Electronic equipment for military use such as communications equipment and radar systems.
- * Specialized equipment for military training or for simulating military scenarios, such as computerized trainers, aircraft and vehicle simulators, components and accessories.
- * Imaging or imaging counter-measure equipment including photographic, thermal imaging equipment and specially-designed components.
- * Unmanned airborne vehicles.
- * Fire control radars, range finding sensors, ballistic computers and related alerting and warning equipment specially designed for military use, as well as parts and components.

Particularly alarming is the permit granted for imaging equipment. According to professor Randy Schwartz, a U.S. expert on imaging, this highly sophisticated technology is "worse than bullets" because "it shows the Indonesian army where to shoot the bullets."

Imaging includes detailed satellite photographs, those taken from unmanned airborne vehicles and from reconnaissance aircraft. When combined with maps, the photographs can help pinpoint the location of guerrillas in the jungle.

"These types of equipment can broadly be characterized as means for gathering information about the current or anticipated field of battle, and for conveying this information rapidly through the military ranks in preparation for combat," Schwartz says. "Such equipment has proven to be indispensable to modern counter-insurgency warfare in particular, which is characterized by unconventional forms of combat (urban uprisings, jungle guerrilla warfare, etc.) in which challenges from the enemy might arise suddenly and without prediction, and in which the enemy himself might be relatively 'hidden.' Weapons wielded by a repressive army like that of Indonesia are relatively harmless until its soldiers know where to aim; the types of equip-



ment listed above make visible what would otherwise be hidden, thereby creating potential targets."

By issuing such permits, the Canadian government is offering the murderous Indonesian army the means to find its enemies who will then of course be killed.

Thermal imaging, which involves the use of infrared cameras that detect heat, has been used in jungle counter-insurgency since the Vietnam War. With U.S. help, the Thai air force used infrared imaging equipment in aerial surveillance during 1969-1970 to locate and capture communist guerrillas in the jungle.

Indonesia's use of thermal imaging has been even deadlier.

According to Schwartz, "In the late 1970s, as it fought to consolidate its military occupation of East Timor, the regime used U.S.-supplied OV-10 Bronco aircraft to carry out massive counter-insurgency bombing runs over the interior highlands, destroying cropland and forcing 300,000 people to flee to squalid refugee camps nearer the coast. Significantly, the Rockwell Broncos were each equipped with infrared detectors as aids in targeting their 3,600 pounds of ordnance, grenade launchers, rockets, machine guns and napalm."

Canadian companies and the federal government have supplied Jakarta with imaging equipment. The East Timor Alert Network website says Aquarius Flight Inc. of Markham, Ontario "has reportedly carried out mapping operations assisting the Indonesian military in counter-insurgency operations in East Timor and West Papua." Aquarius' digital maps are exactly what armies need when repressing insurgents in remote and rugged terrain.

CAL Corporation produces communications equipment for remote sensing (the term for space-based surveillance) and has sold such equipment to Indonesia. In the 1970s, the Canadian Forestry Service provided digital image processing to the Suharto regime in order to create Indonesia's first comprehensive resource maps, based on Landsat satellite images and aerial photographs.

Randy Schwartz says similar help provided to the Pe-

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ruvian government in the late 1970s and early 1980s by the Canadian International Development Agency and the Environmental Research Institute of Michigan was used by the Lima government "to carry out helicopter-based counter-insurgency warfare in the Upper Huallaga Valley resulting in the death of thousands of peasants."

Other Canadian companies that have sold imaging equipment abroad include MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates Ltd. (Canada's leading remote sensing company), WESCAM Inc., ELCAN Optical Technologies, Spar Aerospace and BAE Systems Canada.

Ottawa's determination to supply military hardware even to as reprehensible a force as the Indonesian military can be explained by federal support for the Canadian aerospace sector. This support is the centrepiece of official industrial strategy.

Technology Partnerships Canada (TPC) is the federal government's biggest industrial development program and two-thirds of its funds go to aerospace companies concentrated in Quebec and Ontario.

Companies in Quebec get 52 percent of the money, those in Ontario 31 percent, the West 13 percent and firms in Atlantic Canada get two percent.

In fact, TPC was set up to help aerospace corporations such as Bombardier and Spar Aerospace.

John Geddes, in an article in the November 2, 1998 *Maclean's*, wrote that the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada is "one of Ottawa's best-connected lobby groups."

From 1982 to 1997, the federal government gave \$11 billion in repayable assistance mainly to defence and aerospace-linked industries and got back only 15 percent of this amount.

Meanwhile, the aerospace sector's sales were \$13.4 billion in 1997, double the figure for 1987. Eighty percent of these sales came from exports.

The Canadian government supports military exports for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons is because aerospace companies make huge profits for their shareholders and employ 64,000 well-paid workers in Canada. But could another reason be that several major Canadian aerospace companies which have benefitted from the export of military equipment to Indonesia have made large donations to the Liberal Party of Canada? These include Bombardier Inc., one of the top five donors to the Liberal Party, which gave \$310,613 during 1995-1998. Meanwhile, Pratt and Whitney Canada donated \$76,430 during the same time period.

Asad Ismi is author of "Canadian Military Export to Indonesia, 1979-1999: A Report for the Canadian Labour Congress, April 2000," from which this article has been excerpted.

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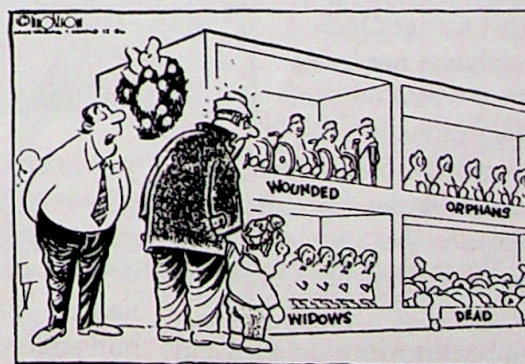
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Regina Local

**Planet Earth:
The Latest Weapon of War
A Critical Study into the Military
and the Environment**
by Dr. Rosalie Bertell
The Women's Press Ltd.
London, UK, 2000.

reviewed by Terry Wolfwood

In her latest book, Dr. Rosalie Bertell writes: "We have been confused by the struggle between communism and capitalism, which has been the dominant dialogue among thinkers for many years. This is basically a conflict over how to manage the excess in an economy."

Dr. Bertell opens up this false premise with a discussion of what she sees as the real issue in today's world, believing that the focus on economics has come at the expense of ecology and the social environment.

In *Planet Earth*, the internationally respected scientist states that the most urgent problem facing humanity is how to sustain our life-support system: Earth. She goes on to say that we need to find a new model, one not based on force in a world of hard and unbending capitalism. Her book is an important contribution to the search for new solutions as well as creating change. She sees signs of hope in the new social movements around the world.

Bertell begins with a detailed and devastating analysis of the wars of the last ten years of the 20th century. She provides an acute scientific basis for the madness of war and the destruction that science, harnessed by the military, is planning for us and our world. She discusses so-called natural disasters that are linked to human-caused climate change, the "down-to-earth problems of Star Wars," and the environmental crises spawned by war-making. There is enough detail and fact to convince any

concerned citizen, particularly those who see saving the environment as a separate struggle, even though peace, economic justice and ecology are one struggle.

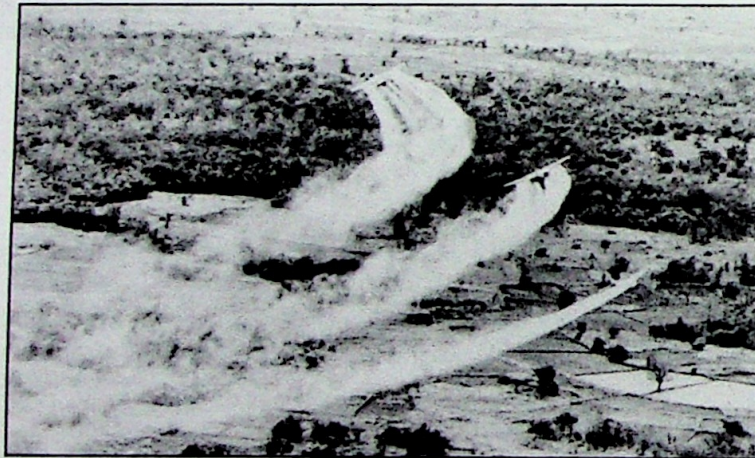
Bertell says that "global consumption of resources is exceeding Earth's restorative capacity by at least 33 percent. War and the preparations for war drastically reduce the store of these resources still further, leading to a self-perpetuating cycle in which competition for raw materials leads to further conflict."

In order to redress this crisis, she says we must tackle the question of security. If the support for the military as the ultimate structure of security, based on the fear of the enemy, is the

the need to alter the core belief of military security. Change always follows a challenge to core beliefs. Consider the examples of civil rights, women's rights, gay rights and the new challenges in the work of children's rights, child soldiers and animal rights activists.

Once we have the conviction that change is needed, that military security and war itself must be abolished, Dr. Bertell shows that we can work together, in honest dialogue about successes and failures, making the connections between differently focused movements to share ideas and insight, and work together in our communities as well as internationally.

This book is full of examples and ideas. It is a book to treasure, for re-



During the Vietnam War, the U.S. sprayed defoliants such as Agents Orange, Purple and White to destroy the vegetation in order to make the countryside uninhabitable. As well, U.S. carpet bombing created 25 million craters, leaving some parts of Vietnam looking like the surface of the moon.

justification for a military-based form of politics, then we can only change the paradigm if we redefine the enemy and develop a new concept of security. We need to challenge the belief of many that military force is a necessary evil.

This new concept embraces a vision of social justice, human rights and the health of the environment. Security will be achieved through the protection and responsible stewardship of the Earth. Dr. Bertell calls this "ecological security," based on a complex multi-faceted approach to the world's problems. Realizing this vision is a big job and requires multi-faceted solutions.

Bertell has many insights and ideas on how to create this solution. She cites

peated reference to information and inspiration. In her own words: "It is my hope that this book will open up for the reader an historical matrix against which to view the present and future . . . I also hope it will spur the reader to become involved in peaceful enterprises. We must set up a cooperative relationship with the Earth, not one of dominance."

She says that in spite of years of abuse, the Earth is still an amazing and beautiful creation. "It deserves our best efforts. Enjoy it, love it and save it!"

Terry Wolfwood works for the Barnard-Boecker Centre Foundation in Victoria, BC.

Localization:

A Global Manifesto

by Colin Hines

Earthscan Publications,

London, UK

and Sterling, Virginia, USA. 2000.

reviewed by Terry Wolfwood

By now most of us know the horrors inflicted by the forces of globalization.

At the beginning of his book, Colin Hines, a British economist, defines globalization by bluntly using the words of the International Society for Ecology and Culture: "1. The process by which governments sign away the rights of their citizens in favour of speculative investors and transnational corporations. 2. The erosion of wages, social welfare standards and environmental regulations for the sake of international trade. 3. The imposition world-wide of a consumer mono-culture. Widely but falsely believed to be irreversible."

The meat of the book is, however, the alternative to globalization. Hines believes that localization can reverse the trend of globalization by discriminating in favour of the local. He points out that "localization is not about restricting the flow of information, technology, trade and investment, management and legal structures which further localization, indeed these are encouraged by a new localist emphasis in global aid and trade rules . . . Localization is not state control, but government provision of a policy and economic framework which allows people, community groups and businesses to diversify their own local economies." Hines is in favour of a supportive internationalism that results in cooperation so everyone can benefit.

Localization is done by people, not something done to them. In localization, boundaries for production and services are set by the best regional results; some may be national; others, civic. Policies and strategies must be developed by a wide range of involved community workers and activists. Tax structures can be changed to favour the local.

Hines sees the beginning of this new force in the present growth of many different local economies. He says it is crucial to have politicians who recognize the benefits of localism - a task of lobbying and electing politicians supported by localization activists who can create public awareness about the failure of globalization as they work for the local.

He describes a new model called the World Localization Organization. At the same time as we work in our communities, it's important that we show international solidarity by working with other activists in the majority world to create international support for localization everywhere.

This book is full of details and strategies, including successful resistance to genetically modified organisms.

A Global Manifesto outlines steps we can follow and modify with the accompanying response to globalization proponents. He shows that green globalization is impossible, but sustainable local agriculture can feed people and preserve the environment where corporate



French farmers protest a U.S. cheese boycott outside a McDonald's by giving away free cheese, WTO protests, 1999, Seattle, Washington.

photo: Elaine Briere

monoculture is failing.

He ends with the rally cry: "Localists of the World Unite - There is an Alternative."

Terry Wolfwood works for the Barnard-Boecker Centre Foundation in Victoria, BC.

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**Levi's Children:
Coming to terms with human rights
in the global marketplace
by Karl Shoenberger
Atlantic Monthly Press**

by Jonathan Eaton

In the global economy, it seems that good guys are destined to finish last. In the garment industry - the most globalized of all industries, with over 160 nations producing fashion good for export into the markets of only about 30 developed countries - one sees plenty of villains but few heroes as the super labels and retail giants seek to claw their way to the top of the market while pushing labour standards ever lower.

Is it possible to be both ethical *and* competitive? This is the dilemma that journalist Karl Shoenberger takes on as he uses Levi's as a model for examining how globalization has brought companies face-to-face with the issue of human rights.

Levi's provides a natural focus for this inquiry. Until recently, it was the largest apparel manufacturer in the world, with 50 North American plants and a global network of over 700 suppliers. It is also a company with a celebrated reputation for progressive policies. As Shoenberger points out, Levi's was ahead of its time in a range of innovative social policies, such as desegregation of its factories in the U.S. Deep South in the 1950s, supporting AIDS education, creating a global code of conduct governing its suppliers, and offering health benefits to employees and their partners including unmarried or same-sex partners.

Levi chief executive Robert Haas - heir to the company's legacy as a descendent of the original Levi Strauss family - described these practices as not just good policy, but also good business. Being a good corporate player,

he argued, would pay off in the bottom line.

Levi's was the first major U.S. company to pull out of Burma in 1992, soon to be followed by a parade of other corporations who pulled the plug on operations in a jurisdiction with perhaps the world's worst human rights record. The following year, Levi's withdrew from China, also in response to pervasive human rights violations.

As Levi's sales soared to over \$7.1 billion in the mid-1990s, it appeared that the company could do no wrong. But then things started to fall apart. Sales plummeted by more than 15 percent over a two-year period and profits sank.

Part of the problem was that the venerable Levi's brand, a dominant player in the market for over 100 years, just wasn't catching the coveted youth market. As hard as it is to admit for members of my generation, who grew up with Levi's as almost an unofficial uniform in our high school years, young people today see the brand as something only their parents would wear.

Scrambling to regain its market position, Levi's did what other corporations had been doing for decades: they slashed domestic production and shipped thousands of jobs to overseas contractors. The company shifted away from manufacturing altogether and, like Nike, became more of a marketer for products made by others. In 1998, Levi's also reversed its stand and announced that it would once again source its products from China.

After resisting a principle for more than a decade, it now would embrace the graven image of globalization whole hog, Shoenberger writes. "The job of making Levi's products would fall almost exclusively on young foreign women - as young as fourteen years old - from poverty stricken homes in Latin America and Asia."

Today, Levi's has just 11 North American plants left.

"The Levi Strauss that was once distinguished as a benevolent employer and a paragon of virtue was now starting to come down to earth," the author concludes. "In the intensely competitive environment of the global marketplace, even the most socially responsible corporation does not have the option of crippling itself for the sake of its abstract principles."

The rise and decline of Levi's as a beacon of corporate social responsibility is a fascinating story that Shoenberger skillfully relates. But what is the real lesson from this corporate parable?

I would argue that it demonstrates not the limits, but the potential of human rights activism. We certainly can't count on any corporations to do the right thing without being pushed. A flood of Western investment has fled Burma, not out of any corporate concern for human rights, but because intensely effective grassroots campaigns have made Burma simply too hot for image-conscious companies. Operating with resources that are barely a fraction of the advertising budgets of the mega brands, advocacy groups have made a real difference. We've got to keep pushing.

The Levi's experience also suggests that we need to provide support for the "good" examples with the same vigour. You can still buy a pair of Levi's 501s that are union made in Canada and feel good about it. And, perhaps, buy a pair for your teenager while you're at it.

Jonathan Eaton is Assistant to the Canadian Director of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. UNITE represents 1,500 workers in four Levi Strauss locals in Canada.

We thank the following for their recent financial contribution to Briarpatch.

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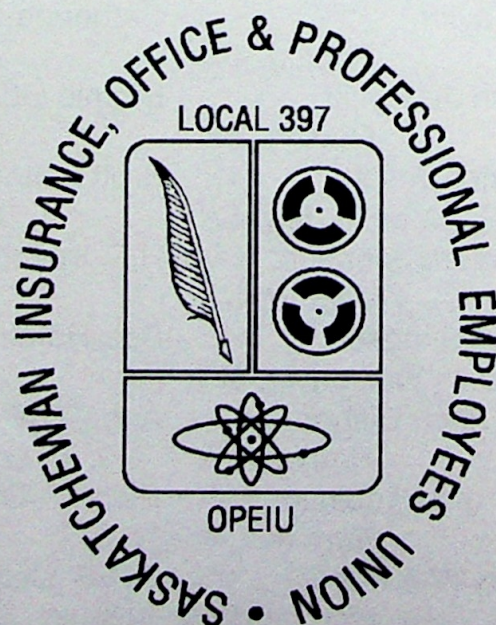
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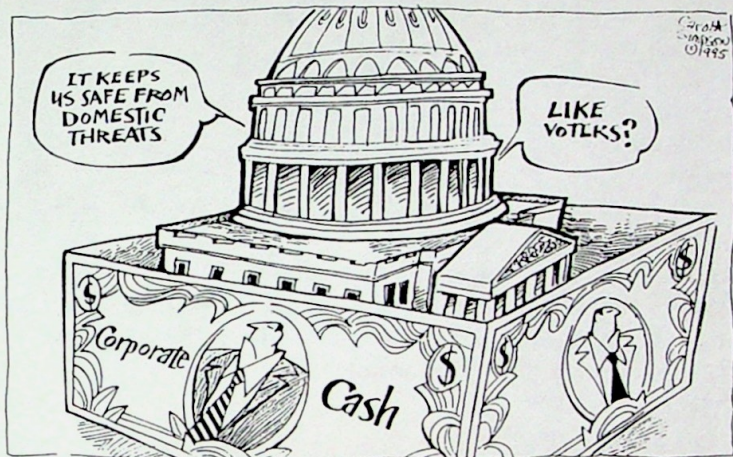


MONEY TALKS

"Campaigns are about ideas. People with a lot of money and lousy ideas don't get beyond first base. We have lots and lots of examples of that."

- Jon Corzine,

Democratic Party candidate for the U.S. Senate in New Jersey. Corzine spent \$34 million just to become one of the two Democratic candidates for the Senate in the state. Plus he spent even more to try to get elected.



HAPPY FACE

"If you don't like globalization, you don't like your neighbours and their jobs. Critics may describe multinationals as big, bad and ugly - but in reality, they are the engines of Canada's economic and social development. Global capitalism has a human face, and for Canadians, this is a happy face."

- Alan Rugman,

in a Globe and Mail article titled "Is globalization good for Canada?" October 18, 2000. Rugman is a Fellow of Strategic Management at Oxford University's Templeton College.

PROVE IT

"If it can't be proved that GM food is harmful, there's also no reason to make labeling compulsory."

- Neville Nankivell,

Financial Post editorial, August 5, 2000.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

"Rather than see increased regulation as the solution to the problem in Walkerton, Ont., MLAs should recognize privatization as a solution to maintaining a healthy water system in the province."

- Lydia A. Miljan,

director of the Alberta Initiative at The Fraser Institute, National Post, August 10, 2000.

Say What??

NIKE'S HUMAN DIGNITY

"We [Nike] uphold the Olympic ideal of human dignity. Those campaigning to eliminate sweatshops are addressing the right issue, but targeting the wrong company."

- Vada Manager,

Nike's global issues manager. Nike has 708 factories operated by contract companies employing about 550,000 people.

CUBA NORTH?

"The NDP has accused us of trying to turn Saskatchewan into Alabama north. The NDP is turning this province into Cuba north."

- Randy Weekes,

Saskatchewan Party MLA for Redberry Lake. In a question to Labour Minister Joanne Crofford, Weekes asked: "It is now illegal to criticize the government in this province. What kind of a dictatorship are you trying to run here?" Weekes is opposed to current labour legislation prohibiting management from interfering in organizing drives.



Farewell

by George Manz

This is my last issue as editor of *Briarpatch*. For the last decade, I have been blessed with working full-time with some of the most gifted writers, photographers and cartoonists, talented staff members, a supportive board of directors, and the most dedicated readers in the world.

It's been a great 18 years. When I moved back to Canada in 1982, all my friends were working with *Briarpatch* in one way or another, so I started hanging around the office, volunteering to do all the odd jobs that needed to be done. It was fun and soon it became my obsession. I woke up in the morning and couldn't wait to go to *Briarpatch*. And then ten years ago, I was actually offered money to do the job I loved to do for free. It's been the best job of my life.

Things haven't really changed that much for me since then. Except I feel I have given as much of my life to *Briarpatch* as I am able, and think it's time for someone else to lead the magazine to the next level.

Debra Brin will usher in a new and exciting era as our new editor. I know our readers, writers, supporters and advertisers will give her the same assistance you have given me.

In some ways, *Briarpatch* has been a success. We now break even most of the time. You can find the magazine on more newsstands than before I came on board. We're on the Internet. Lots of our articles are being reprinted in other magazines and newsletters. Some are even translated into other languages.

The trade union movement has been an important ally in our quest for a better life for Canadians. We have close links to many unions across the country. Union advertising has mushroomed in the last ten years, and some unions are purchasing extra copies for their members to read.

But I feel somewhat sad that *Briarpatch* (and other alternative magazines) don't get the credit we deserve. After all, we're all working toward the day when social justice can emerge from its cocoon and finally spread its glorious

wings.

That's being hampered by the mainstream media, which is being monopolized at an ever increasing rate. And yet the *Briarpatch* voice, along with the rest of the alternative media, is being ignored because we have something we think is imperative for everyone to know in order for a more just society to evolve.

When I started at *Briarpatch*, I hoped and believed that huge numbers of people across this nation would flock to the magazine after being disillusioned by the mainstream media. But it hasn't happened. Maybe it's because I'm a lousy editor, or that the magazine is too full of stories about the bad guys (corporations and governments) winning at the expense of the good guys (that's the rest of us).

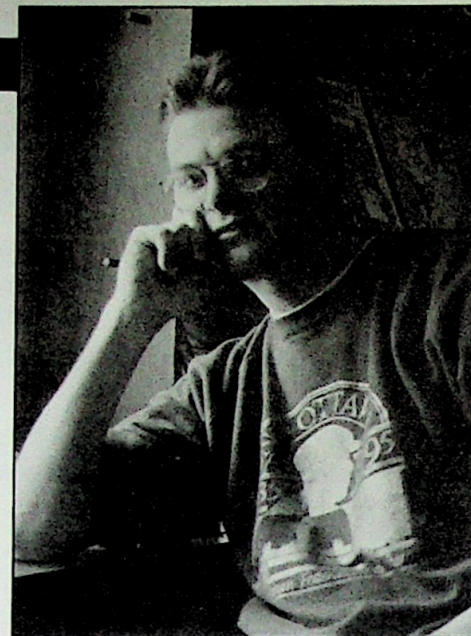
But you can help. If every *Briarpatch* subscriber sold just one subscription to a friend, relative or neighbour, we could double our readership. But that's only going to happen if you take a subscription form from inside the magazine and sell a subscription for us. Or maybe you'd like to buy a gift subscription for someone on your holiday list. That's how I first started to read *Briarpatch* and I have been a *Briarpatch* groupie ever since.

When I came to *Briarpatch*, I had lots of hope for the world. And I still do. Activists like yourself won the fight against the MAI, we banned Bovine Growth Hormones in milk in Canada, and we successfully beat back the WTO's globalization agenda in Seattle. And we can win many other battles as well.

For many years, you have supported *Briarpatch* in a variety of ways. *Briarpatch* gets more donations from its readers than any other progressive magazine in Canada. That means you, our readers, must think fairly highly of the magazine and what it's trying to accomplish.

And you support our many other fundraising events as well: our May Day benefits, art raffles, swim-a-thons, bottle drives and garage sales.

All we need to do is work together. With your help, this small *Briarpatch* spark



will join thousands of other sparks across Canada and around the world to ignite a fire so intense that the ruling classes will never be able to put it out.

* * *

Since I made my decision to leave *Briarpatch*, many people have asked me what I'm going to do with my life.

Well, believe it or not, I'm setting up a web site on the Internet to sell coins. Why coins you ask? I've collected coins for almost 40 years now, when my papa gave me some of his extras. So now I want to see if I can turn my hobby into a way of earning a modest living.

Since few of you probably collect coins, I'll spare you the details. But I will be selling Canadian and foreign coins, coins from Newfoundland and the Maritimes, tokens, commemorative medals, as well as odd and curious money.

One of my specialties will be selling coins from revolutionary countries such as Cuba. So if you want any coins that have Lenin, Che or Fidel on them, you might want to check out my web site: www.georgemanzcoins.com

Don't worry. I'm not making an ideological shift. I just want to do something different. You'll still see me at picket lines and demonstrations.

Keep the faith.

My Opinion does not necessarily represent the editorial views of Briarpatch. We welcome submissions and encourage any ensuing dialogue.

Solidarity



in a world without borders

The Canadian Auto Workers Union prides itself on our practice of social unionism. We take every opportunity we can to build solidarity, in spite of borders, because of our common cause with other workers around the world.

What we want for ourselves we want for all workers and their families.

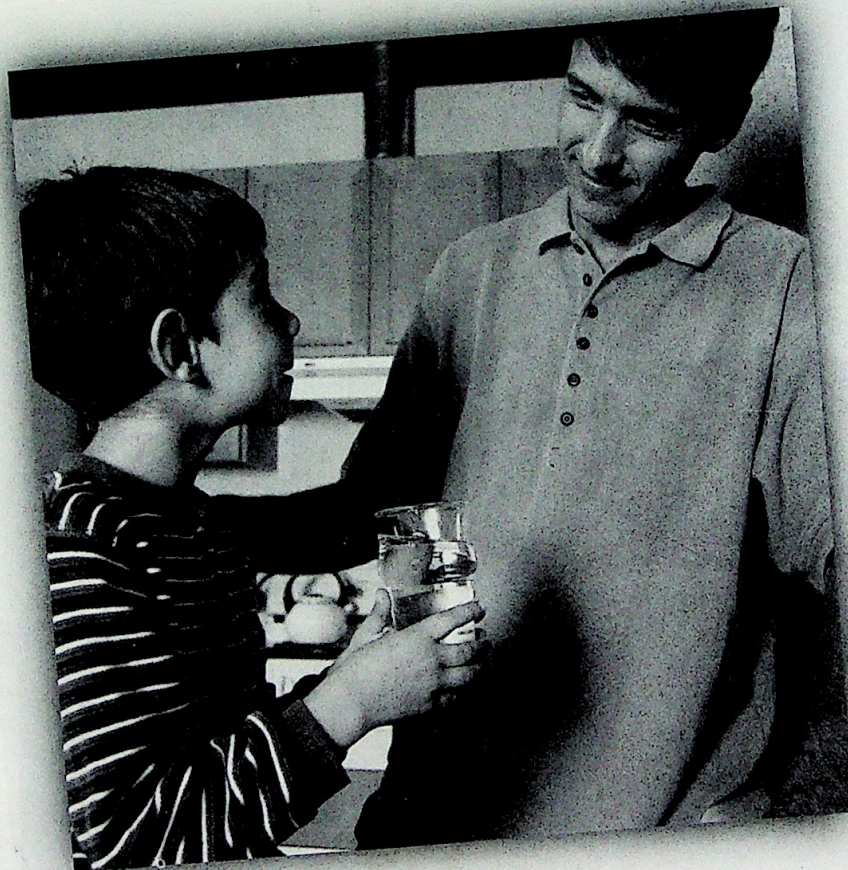
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Confidence.

It comes from knowing our tap water
is clean and safe.



Reliable drinking water should be a right for all Canadians. But the systems that treat and deliver our water are in critical condition right now.

That's why CUPE has founded Water Watch. With over 30 Water Watch groups in communities just like yours, Water Watch truly is the eyes and ears of clean, safe public water.

Poorly funded and under-resourced municipal systems are in danger of failing communities. Help strengthen and improve our water systems. Water Watch is pushing for increased funding, strong regulation and inspection and a commitment to public ownership and delivery.



Join Water Watch



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